

FTA REGION II NEWSLETTER

FTA Region II
One Bowling Green, Room 429
New York, New York 10004-1415
(212) 668-2170
(212) 668-2136 (Fax)

Spring 2001/ Volume 2, Number 2

www.fta.dot.gov

Editors: Madeleine Duchatellier, Brian Sterman

Jennifer Dorn Nominated to be FTA Administrator

Jennifer L. Dorn has been nominated by President George W. Bush to be the next Federal Transit Administrator. Ms. Dorn previously served at the Department of Transportation from 1983 to 1987, holding several positions including Associate Deputy Secretary and Director of the Office of Commercial Space Transportation. She most recently was the President of the National Health Museum and from 1991 to 1998 was Senior Vice President of the American Red Cross. Ms. Dorn served as Assistant Secretary of Labor from 1989 to 1991.

Originally from Nebraska, Ms. Dorn is a graduate of Oregon State University and received a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the University of Connecticut.

FTA FY2002 Budget Proposal

On April 9, 2001, President George W. Bush and Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta sent to Congress the Administration's proposal for FTA's Fiscal Year 2002 budget. When combined with state and local funding, the proposed \$6.7 billion FTA program is an eight percent increase over the agency's FY2001 budget.

The proposal will increase the FTA Formula grant program nine percent above the FY2001 budget to \$3.6 billion, the Capital Investment grant program five percent to \$2.8 billion, and the Metropolitan and Statewide Planning programs six percent to \$67 million. The proposal also increases the Job Access and Reverse Commute program 25 percent to \$125 million and the Over-the Road Accessibility program to \$7 million. FTA's Research and Technology Program will increase four percent to \$49 million. The University Transportation Centers will be provided \$6 million.

Key initiative proposals include formulizing the Bus Discretionary, and

Job Access and Reverse Commute programs, increasing the local share match for New Start projects to 50 percent, and allowing States to use FTA capital project funds for rail transit safety oversight activities.

FTA Introduces TEAM-Web

FTA has created a new version of its Transportation Electronic Award Management (TEAM) system. The new version, called TEAM-Web, will permit grantees to submit their grant information via the Internet. Grantees no longer will need to load TEAM software from a compact disc in order to access TEAM. However, since TEAM-Web is a web-based program, users will be required to have Internet access and either Internet Explorer 5.5 or Netscape 6.0 installed on their personal computer in order to access the web site, as well as Windows 95 or a newer version. Grantees should be using a 486DX/66MHz computer or higher.

TEAM-Web is scheduled to be operating for processing grant information by the beginning of Fiscal Year 2002. For the convenience of its customers, FTA will migrate all current user information to TEAM-Web at that time. The BETA test version of TEAM-Web is now available. FTA grantees are encouraged to use this advanced opportunity to review this latest enhancement by accessing the web site, <http://FTATEAMWeb.fta.dot.gov>.

FTA Issues ROD For East Side Access

FTA provided an environmental Record of Decision for the MTA Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) East Side Access (ESA) project on May 21st. ESA involves bringing LIRR service directly to the East Side of Manhattan by constructing new tunnels in Queens and Manhattan and a new terminal beneath Grand Central Terminal. The tunnels will be connected to the lower level of the existing 63rd Street Tunnel, which passes under the East River.

Approximately seven miles of new tunnels and more than 50,000 linear feet of track will be constructed.

Approximately \$4.3 million is estimated to be expended to construct the tunnel, new terminal, and various storage and support facilities, and to purchase vehicles for the expanded LIRR service. More than 35,000 new daily LIRR customers are expected to be attracted by the new service.

FTA Proposes to Combine D&A Regulations

FTA announced that is proposing to combine its drug and alcohol testing regulations. The Notice of Proposed Rule Making, which was published in the April 30, 2001 Federal Register, would combine 49 CFR Parts 653, the drug testing rule, and 49 CFR Part 654, the alcohol testing rule, into one drug and alcohol testing rule, 49 CFR Part 655.

This action would make the rules more "user-friendly" and easier to understand. The proposed rule would take into account the guidance that FTA has issued in the past several years, including technical assistance, letters of interpretation, audit findings, newsletters, training classes, safety seminars, and public speaking engagements. In addition, the proposed rule conforms FTA's rule to the USDOT's revised drug and alcohol testing rule that was published on December 19, 2000.

A copy of the proposed rule can be obtained from the FTA Web Site.

Electronic Delivery of Region 2 Newsletter

The FTA Region 2 newsletter is now available electronically. Anyone interested in receiving a copy of the newsletter via e-mail, should e-mail a note to Madeleine Duchatellier at madeleine.duchatellier@fta.dot.gov. The e-mail message should provide your e-mail address, and indicate whether you are currently receiving newsletters via posted mail.

HBLRT Success Shared With its Community

A major achievement of New Jersey Transit's Hudson Bergen's Light Rail Transit Line (HBLRT) has been the successful involvement of local residents in the line's construction. The HBLRT runs through communities of Hudson County with substantial minority populations.

To make maximum use of local residents, the state of New Jersey assigned participation goals in every construction trade of 38 percent for minorities and 6.9 percent for women. The Design Build, Operate and Maintain (DBOM) contract for the system were assigned Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goals of as high as 30 percent for construction and 20 percent for operating and maintaining the system. However, many of the unions had insufficient numbers of minorities and females to meet the assigned hiring goals and a shortage of qualified DBE firms existed.

A special task force was established to address the issues consisting of members from the State, County, municipalities, trade groups, and technical schools. Meeting monthly, the group focused on maximizing the benefits of the HBLRT in the community, increasing the participation of DBEs in the project, improving local minority and female employment in the trades, and coordinating funding for training programs. The result was a multi-faceted outreach, recruitment, and training program managed by a subcontractor to the project, Qualified Women/Minorities in Construction, Inc.

To reach out to potential workers, recruitment days were regularly held, at which applicants were screened for "Welfare to Work" eligibility, tested and interviewed, and registered in Pre-Apprenticeship programs with union-sponsored construction trade programs. Many training initiatives were created for the construction and transportation trades and for technical support positions. Training funds were secured through the State of New Jersey and Hudson County from various Federal, State and local sources. One key training effort established two different twelve-week, full time International Masonry Institute programs. Graduates from the Masonry Institute program were awarded a set of tools and safety equipment,

accepted as third year apprentices by the union locals, and provided stipends and weekly expense payments.

Outreach to potential DBE's included a series of workshops and training programs. The DBOM contractor, 21st Century Rail Corp., co-sponsored a seven-week Entrepreneur Training Institute for non-construction businesses and eight Contractors Assistance Programs coordinated by the Regional Alliance for Small Contractors.

This precedent setting program is coming closer to reaching its goals. As of March 2001, minority participation in the HBLRT construction trades has been 28.5 percent and female participation has been 4.1 percent. 21st Century has met most of its DBE goals to date.

USDOT Proposes Revisions To DBE Rules

USDOT is proposing revisions to the Department's regulations for its Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program (49 CFR part 26) that would provide uniform reporting requirements, implement a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between USDOT and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) streamlining certain certification procedures, and include revisions to certain provisions of the rule. The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM), which was printed in the May 8, 2001 Federal Register, supplements the February 2, 1999 final DBE rule.

The NPRM proposes a uniform DBE reporting form and a uniform DBE certification. It also provides procedures for submitting DBE reports. This part of the rule addresses USDOT's commitment in the February 2, 1999 Final Rule to develop such reports.

The second part of the NPRM implements a November 23, 1999 MOU between USDOT and SBA that streamlines certification procedures for participation in SBA's 8(a) Business Development (8(a) BD) and Small Disadvantaged Business (SDB) programs, and DOT's DBE program for small and disadvantaged businesses. This streamlined process is designed to reduce administrative costs and to provide more opportunities for small businesses owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals. It also establishes procedures for the efficient transfer of

information among SBA, DOT, and DOT recipients, and for the consideration of certification appeals.

The third part of the NPRM proposes substantive changes to several provisions, including personal net worth, retainage, the size standard, proof of ethnicity, confidentiality, proof of economic disadvantage, and DBE credit for trucking firms. The purpose of the revisions are to reduce red tape and remove barriers to the successful participation of small businesses in USDOT funded programs.

Rolling Applications for TIFIA Credit Assistance

USDOT announced the availability of Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) assistance in the May 18, 2001 Federal Register and invited the submittal of applications for credit assistance for major surface transportation projects. TIFIA authorizes USDOT to provide credit assistance in the form of secured (direct) loans, lines of credit, and loan guarantees to public and private sponsors of surface transportation projects. These include transit, passenger rail, highway, intermodal, and intelligent transportation systems projects.

Applications will be considered as part of a "rolling" application process, a major change to the program. Applications were previously entertained and reviewed on a fixed schedule.

For further information regarding the TIFIA assistance program, contact Paul Marx of the FTA Office of Policy Development at 202-366-1675.

Upcoming Training In FTA Region 2

The following is an annotated list of available FTA-sponsored training to occur in either FTA Region 2 or nearby areas. A more complete listing can be obtained from the Grantee Web Page or by contacting the institutions mentioned below.

National Transit Institute Courses
(732-932-1700) or visit them on-line
at <http://www.ntionline.com/>

Construction Management Workshop
Jun 20-22, Jamaica, NY

Design-Build Project Development
Jul 24-25, Newark, NJ